REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6 have been amended to further define the invention. Claims 7-19 have been added to claim additional features of the claimed invention.

Applicant submits that the claims have been amended to merely clarify the subject matter of the claims and in no way narrow the scope of the claims in order to overcome the prior art or for any other statutory purpose of patentability.

Notwithstanding any claim amendments of the present Amendment or those amendments that may be made later during prosecution, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,781,773 to Vanderpool et al. (hereinafter, Vanderpool) in view of Yang et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,301,586). Claims 2 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vanderpool and Yang, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,466,941 to Rowe et al. (hereinafter, Rowe).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the following discussion.

I.   THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention, as defined in claim 1, is directed to an apparatus for controlling display of database search items. The apparatus includes a database including an element-data storage table in which has been stored, on a field-by-field basis, element data corresponding to the fields, an item-name table which stipulates, field-by-field, an item name character that corresponds to a search-item name and a field name, and a display-item designation table that stores ordered display-item data corresponding to the item name character for an ordered display on a display unit, the ordered display being determined by a user.

The apparatus further includes a select-command input device for applying a select command for designating the ordered display-item data, a display-item data read-out device for reading out, from the display-item designation table, the ordered display-item data that

conforms to the select command applied by the select-command input device, a search-item name read-out device for reading out, from the item-name table, the search-item name to be displayed on the display unit, the search-item name being designated by the ordered display-item data read out by the display-item data read-out device, and a display control unit for displaying the search-item name, which has been read out by the search-item name read-out device, on the display unit as a database search-item name.

Importantly, the apparatus also includes <u>a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on the search page by inputting at least one of change-targeted- item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table, data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search- item name to the item-name table, display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table, and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table</u>.

Conventionally, a database is created by designing tables constructed within the database and configuring a scheme that is in line with a specific task. However, it is difficult to apply the database to other tasks. Thus, the database must be redesigned if it is to be applied to another task. Further, such redesign of the database can be complex and therefore, must be performed by an expert in handling databases. (Application at page 1, lines 12-27).

The claimed invention, on the other hand, <u>includes a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on the search page by inputting at least one of change-targeted-item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table, data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search- item name to the item-name table, display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table, and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table</u> (Application at Figure 1; page 13, line 6-page 19, line 23). These novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to make changes or additions to the search items on a search page (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

II.   THE PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

A.   The Vanderpool and Yang References

The Examiner alleges that Vanderpool would have been combined with Yang to form

the invention of claims 1, 3 5 and 6. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Vanderpool discloses a database generation process 30, in which a text record merge file 84 and a listing number file 86 are applied to a database builder program 34 (col. 6, lines 33-36). In addition, various user defined inputs 32 are provided to the database builder 43 (col. 6, lines 36-37). Such user defined inputs may include: lists of the fields of the various commonly formatted data which the database builder is to index in table form; lists of fields to be used as summary data; and the data to be used as tax data (col, 6, lines 37-41).

Yang discloses a system for managing multimedia objects. The system is intended to improve organization of multimedia objects through the use of albums , and improved printout of multimedia objects through user-activateable selection of particular fields from a multimedia database (Yang at Abstract).

However, Applicant respectfully submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, these references are completely <u>unrelated</u>, and no person of ordinary skill in the art would have considered combining these disparate references, <u>absent impermissible hindsight</u>.

In fact, Applicant submits that the Examiner can point to <u>no motivation or suggestion</u> in the references to urge the combination as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, neither of these references teach or suggest their combination.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been so motivated to combine the references as alleged by the Examiner. Therefore, the Examiner has <u>failed to make a prima facie case of obviousness</u>.

Moreover, Applicant submits that neither Vanderpool, nor Yang, nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests "*a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on said search page by inputting at least one of: change-targeted item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table; data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search- item name to the item-name table; display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table; and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table*", as recited, for example, in

claim 1. As noted above, these novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to make **changes or additions to the search items on a search page** (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

Clearly, these features are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Indeed, Applicant would point out that nowhere does the Examiner point out where the Vanderpool or Yang references might allegedly teach or suggest <u>a tool for changing search items</u> <u>displayed on a search page</u>. Instead, the Examiner merely attempts to identify where the references allegedly disclose modifying data in a database.

In fact, Applicant would respectfully submit that even assuming(arguendo) that Vanderpool and Yang may address modifying data in a database, nowhere do Vanderpool or Yang teach or suggest a tool for changing search items displayed on a search page, as in the claimed invention.

For example, Figure 7 in the present application illustrates a search page which includes the search items "PRODUCT CATEGORY", "PRODUCT NAME", etc. The claimed invention allows a user (e.g., a non-expert user) to easily change, add to, or delete from, the search items on the search page. Thus, for example, a user may use the claimed invention to change the search items displayed on the search page, as illustrated in Figure 8. That is, the user may use the claimed invention to easily replace the search item "PRODUCT CATEGORY" with the search item "PRODUCT CLASS". Nowhere are these novel features taught or suggested by the cited references.

Indeed, Vanderpool rarely mentions a search screen and when he does it is only in passing. For example, referring to Figure 9, Vanderpool states that the search routine 140 provides a startup screen 142 that is utilized to initialize the system with proper identification 143 and bring up a search screen 144 (col. 9, lines 24-29). Vanderpool states that the search screen 144 provides the interface for the user to define search queries and then request the results of such search queries per the results screen 146 (col. 6, lines 29-32).

However, nowhere does Vanderpool teach or suggest a manner of changing the search items in the search screen. Thus, in Figure 10 which illustrates search screen 144 in Vanderpool, the search screen 144 will always include "AREA METRO CODE", "LIST PRICE RANGE", etc. That is, nowhere does Vanderpool teach or suggest a manner for

changing the term "AREA METRO CODE" to "AREA CODE", and so on.

Likewise Yang does not teach or suggest the novel features of the invention. Indeed, Yang may teach a search menu (Yang at Figure 34; col. 24, lines 18-28). For example, the search menu in Figure 34 in Yang includes the terms "COLLECTIONS/ALBUMS TO SEARCH IN" and "PROPERTIES". However, nowhere does Yang teach how the search menu can be changed. Thus, for example, Yang does not teach or suggest how the term "PROPERTIES" could be deleted from the search menu in Figure 34. Thus, Yang clearly fails to make up for the deficiencies in Vanderpool.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

B.   The Rowe Reference

The Examiner alleges that Vanderpool would have been combined with Yang, and that the alleged Vanderpool/Yang combination would have been further combined with Rowe to form the invention of claims 2 and 4. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Rowe discloses content management tool in combination with a database. The tool allows authorized end-users to create entries for each of a plurality of record tables and create and/or delete links between records in a first of the tables and records in a second of the tables (Rowe at col. 2, lines 20-32).

However, Applicant respectfully submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, these references are completely underlined_unrelated, and no person of ordinary skill in the art would have considered combining these disparate references, absent impermissible hindsight.

In fact, Applicant submits that the Examiner can point to no motivation or suggestion in the references to urge the combination as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, neither of these references teach or suggest their combination.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been so motivated to combine the references as alleged by the Examiner. Therefore, the Examiner has <u>failed to make a prima facie case of obviousness</u>.

Moreover, Applicant submits that neither Vanderpool, nor Yang, nor Rowe, nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests "*a customizing tool for changing search items displayed on said search page by inputting at least one of: change-targeted item-name data for changing a search-item name in the item-name table; data representing an additional search-item name for adding a search- item name to the item-name table; display-item change data for changing a display-item in the display-item designation table; and display-item add-on data for adding on a display-item to the display item designation table*", as recited, for example, in claim 1. As noted above, these novel features allow a user not accustomed to handling databases to make **changes or additions to the search items on a search page** (Application at page 2, lines 1-5).

Clearly, these features are not taught or suggested by the Rowe. Indeed, Applicant would point out that as with Vanderpool and Yang, nowhere does the Examiner point out where Rowe might allegedly teach or suggest <u>a tool for changing search items displayed on a search page</u>. Instead, the Examiner merely attempts to identify where Rowe allegedly discloses modifying data in a database.

In fact, Applicant submits that nowhere does Rowe teach or suggest <u>a tool for changing search items displayed on a search page</u>. Instead Rowe merely teaches a means for modifying a content of a database (e.g., see Rowe at col. 2, lines 15-50). Hence, the title of the Rowe patent is "Content Management Tool" and not "Search Page Customization Tool". Therefore, Rowe clearly does not make up for the deficiencies of Vanderpool and Yang.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

III.   FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-19, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance.   The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.
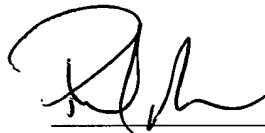
Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 1/10/05

Phillip E. Miller
Reg. No. 46,060

McGinn & Gibb, PLLC
8321 Old Courthouse Road
Vienna, Virginia 22182-3817
(703) 761-4100
Customer No. 21254